

REMARKS

Claim 42, 43 and 49 have been amended and claim 44 to 48 and 50 to 53 have been cancelled. Claims 42, 43 and 49 remain active in this application.

Claim 42 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Tamura (U.S. 6,078,068) and claims 43 and 49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tamura in view of Countryman et al. (U.S. 5,514,892). The rejection is respectfully traversed as to the claims as amended.

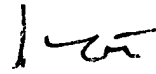
Claim 42 requires, among other features, that the I/O buffer extend unimpeded from the scribe region to the core region disposed laterally of the bond pad and the electrostatic discharge device relative to said core region and the scribe region. No such structure is found in Tamura alone or in Tamura in view of Countryman et al. This structure provides maximum real estate availability for the I/O buffer and thereby results in greater component packing density relative to the prior art. As stated at page 1, lines 16-17 of the subject application, "[a] component of integrated circuits that occupies a relatively large area are the input/output (I/O) modules.

Claim 43 depends from claim 42 and therefore defines patentably over the applied references for at least the reason set forth above with reference to claim 42.

Claim 49 has the same features discussed above with reference to claim 42 except that it is written in method format. Accordingly, the arguments as to claim 49 are the same as for claim 42 and are incorporated by reference.

In view of the above remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Cantor", written in a cursive style.

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